

## Equal Opportunity Planning 1997-2002 KY Plan and OCR Partnership Status

A final determination of the status of Kentucky's partnership with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights is due by March 31, 2003. Because all of the commitments in the agreement have not been completed, it is possible that the Office for Civil Rights may choose to extend the partnership but focus on the commitments not yet completed; e.g., renovations, the Kentucky State University education program, and the University of Louisville's Pathways to Success Program.

The partnership with the U. S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights ended December 31, 2002. The partnership agreement is intended to bring Kentucky into full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The partnership encompasses the Kentucky Plan and focuses more specifically on Title VI. The goals of the Kentucky Plan and the Partnership are to:

1. Increase minority student enrollment at traditionally white institutions.
2. Increase the number of minorities employed at the traditionally white institutions, especially in administrative and faculty positions.
3. Continue to strengthen Kentucky State University, the Commonwealth's historically black institution, in its role in the postsecondary education system.

The OCR has indicated in previous reports that the Commonwealth has completed the commitments identified in items #1 and #2. Portions of the commitments identified in item #3 also have been completed. The commitments completed are: a) the renovation of Carver Hall classroom building; b) KSU's development and implementation of a program of communication and diversity training; c) CPE's analysis and assurance that the benchmark funding process will not disadvantage KSU; d) KSU, UK, UofL, and the council's collaboration to enhance and strengthen KSU's education program; and e) the Governor and the Postsecondary Education Nominating Board's assurance that the KSU Board of Regents is of the highest caliber.

The commitments in item #3 not yet completed are: a) the renovation of Hathaway Hall classroom and office building; b) the renovation of Young Hall

dormitory; c) KSU's assurance to substantially narrow the gap between the performance rate of its students on the PRAXIS II as compared to the Kentucky statewide performance average; and d) UofL's Pathways Program.

Each of the universities provided status reports on their efforts to implement the commitments of the partnership agreement to the council office in September 2002. The reports from institutions are used to develop the status reports to the OCR. The OCR has requested that the final partnership report focus exclusively on the commitments that have not yet been completed. There are two remaining areas to be addressed by the Commonwealth. Following is a summary of the areas addressed in the final report to the OCR:

I. Enhancement of Kentucky State University

- The Commonwealth is presently operating without a biennial budget constitutionally enacted by the Kentucky General Assembly. The Governor executed an executive order with an attached spending plan for fiscal year 2002-03. Although the council recommended additional state budget authority for the Hathaway Hall renovation and institutional authority for the Young Hall renovation, the Commonwealth is prohibited from issuing any long-term debt except that it be authorized by the General Assembly in an approved budget. The General Assembly will meet in February 2003 and may enact a budget at that time. The Carver Hall renovation is underway and Phase I of the Hathaway Hall renovation is underway.
- KSU is working with Kentucky's Education Professional Standards Board and the other public institutions to strengthen and enhance its academic programs; in particular, the education program.
- While it is not a part of the partnership agreement with the OCR, KSU and the council are proceeding with the comprehensive assessment of KSU as discussed at the September council meeting. The KSU Comprehensive Assessment Oversight Committee selected Baker & Hostetler, LLP, of Cleveland, Ohio, to complete the assessment of the university's academic programs and the adequacy and use of financial resources. The contract to engage Baker & Hostetler was approved by the Government Contract Review Committee in December 2002. There are nine members on the review team. The resumes of the team members are available in the council offices. The team began the assessment in December following approval of its contract. Two members of the assessment team visited Frankfort Tuesday, January 21, to discuss the visit of the full assessment team scheduled for February 2-4, 2003. Mr. Raymond Pierce, Baker & Hostetler, is attending the council meeting and will be available to answer questions. The anticipated completion date is February or March 2003.

- Although it is not a part of the partnership with the OCR, the council's 2002-04 biennial budget recommendations included a request for state funds to complete the federal match required by the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998.
- In July 2002, the Governor appointed two new members to the KSU Board of Regents.

## II. University of Louisville Pathways to Success Program

- In its most recent report, UofL administrators reported that they have worked closely with Jefferson County Public Schools and Jefferson Community College in the last year and have increased student preparedness. As a result, they have reduced the number of sections of developmental math and reading courses at UofL, and all students enroll in a 100 level English course, eliminating the need for developmental writing.
- UofL administrators noted that African Americans are not disproportionately referred to the Pathways Program: approximately 28 percent of Kentucky resident African Americans were referred to the Pathways Program, compared to 66 percent white; the percentage of African American referrals has slightly decreased (from 27.9 percent to 27.5 percent).
- Administrators also expect to collaborate with JCC to improve communications and receive advice from the newly formed Pathways Advisory Committee; members of the committee include UofL, JCC, JCPS, the council, and the community.
- The number of African American students that transferred from the Pathways Program to UofL increased by 566 percent: 3 in 2001, compared to 17 in 2002. Additional increases are anticipated now that the program has been fully implemented.

The next meeting of the council's Committee on Equal Opportunities is Monday, February 17, 2003, in Meeting Room A at the council office.

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